

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMCONSUL BELIZE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 200321

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: HO, PINT, PINS, PGOV, PDIP

SUBJECT: EMBASSY POSTURE IN AFTERMATH OF REMOVAL OF CHIEF
OF STATE

REF: (A) TEGUCIGALPA 3731 (B) STATE 198351

1. DEPARTMENT DOES NOT CONSIDER REPLACEMENT OF CHIEF OF
STATE MELGAR BY JUNTA TO BE A COUP D'ETAT AND THEREFORE
WE EXPECT TO CONTINUE OUR EXISTING RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERN-
MENT. RATIONALE IS THAT SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL (SDC)
WAS SUPREME GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY WHICH INSTALLED AND
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REMOVED MELGAR (OR ACCEPTED HIS RESIGNATION) AND WHICH
INSTALLED NEW JUNTA. SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL THEREFORE
CONTINUES TO GOVERN HONDURAS THROUGH APPOINTED CHIEF OF
STATE (OR JUNTA). EMBASSY SHOULD THEREFORE CONTINUE NORMAL
CONTACTS WITH GOH IN ORDER TO CONDUCT ROUTINE BUSINESS.

2. HOWEVER, DEPARTMENT WISHES TO CAREFULLY MONITOR DEVELOP-

MENTS FOR A SHORT TIME IN ORDER TO OBSERVE INITIAL ACTIONS
AND POLICIES OF JUNTA BEFORE GIVING SIGNAL OF HIGH LEVEL
CONTACTS WHICH COULD BE INTERPRETED AS POLITICAL SUPPORT.
THEREFORE, EMBASSY SHOULD REFRAIN FROM INITIATING HIGH-
LEVEL CONTACTS OR SIGNING GOVERNMENT-TO GOVERNMENT AGREEMENTS

PENDING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. AMBASSADOR MAY RECEIVE
ANY GOH REPRESENTATIVES, HOWEVER, AND MAY ATTEND GROUP
MEETINGS OF AMBASSADORS IF SHE
IS SUMMONED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY OR CHIEF OF STATE'S
OFFICE. EMBASSY SHOULD NOT RESPOND TO PRESS OR OTHER
INQUIRIES REGARDING RECOGNITION OR CONTACTS, THOUGH IT
MAY USE DEPARTMENT'S PRESS GUIDANCE (SEPTTEL).

3. WE NOTE PARA 6 OF FBIS ACCOUNT OF ARMED FORCES
COMMUNIQUE STATES, INTER ALIA, GOVERNMENT WILL CONTINUE
TO OBSERVE INTERNATIONAL TREATIES AND AGREEMENTS, WILL
CONTINUE THE MEDIATION PROCESS WITH EL SALVADOR, AND WILL
CONTINUE TO RESPECT PRESS FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS.
AMBASSADOR SHOULD, AS APPROPRIATE, CONTINUE TO INDICATE
U.S. SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AS NOTED IN REF (B).

4. PLEASE KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS,
INCLUDING PUBLIC REACTION, AND EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION
ON WHEN HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS SHOULD BE INITIATED AND
CONTENT OF ANY PROPOSED EMBASSY PRESS STATEMENT. CHRISTOPHER
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